

profiting from their hometown's natural wealth so long as the RUF remains there. 'I am living like this all because of diamonds,' [a refugee] said, surveying a crush of humanity at the camp's food distribution center." A War Driven by Diamonds, Los Angeles Times, 5/26/00.

"That a criminal economy can eat away at the heart of states and whole nations is nothing new. But recent events in Lierra Leone have shown that it can also divert to its own advantage an entire peacekeeping operation run by the United Nations and supported by the main foreign powers . . . We must be clear about who is involved. Barbaric, drug-crazed and dragooned by the warlords as they may be armed and desperate young men could not have brought UNAMSIL to it knees all on their own. The UN has been ensnared by something different, something newer and more insidious; by a struggle between two rival groups supported by businessmen intent on gaining control of mineral wealth." *Sierra Leone's Diamond Wars, Le Monde*, 6/00.

"The Kalashnikov lifestyle helps our business, sing the child-soldiers of the RUF. When these kids with guns—doubly cursed by a war in which they are born to live as killers and then die young—watched the blue berets moving towards the diamond fields last March, they did not see them as representatives of an international community intent on disarming them and generously giving them an education, health, social protection and work. This is just one more faction that wanted to take their territory away from them so as to deprive them of their source of wealth . . ." *Sierra Leone's Diamond Wars, Le Monde*, 6/00.

"At least three wars in Africa are 'fueled' by diamonds . . . A campaign partly financed by Britain, is seeking to alert consumers to 'conflict' diamonds. Seeing what animal-rights campaigners did to fur, this has terrified the whole industry." *Losing Their Sparkle: How to Stop Diamonds Paying for Nasty African Wars, The Economist*, 6/3/00.

"When they chop off people's hands, they will say to the victims, 'Let's see how you're going to vote now,' [Sierra Leone's Ambassador] Liegh explained. 'In Sierra Leone, people re in a state of shock. Nobody throughout the fellow Africans could be this vicious' The extreme violence, he said, is explained by the diamonds, which the rebels—who have received support from Libya and neighboring Liberia—seek to control. 'The greedier you are, the more violent you are,' he said." *An African Ambassador Battles Terror and Indifference, New York Times*, 6/5/00.

"As the people of Sierra Leone, Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have found to their cost, diamonds from rebel-controlled mines are the perfect currency to discreetly buy arms, bribe officials and keep soldiers fed and fighting. Stones smaller than a fingernail can be easily hidden and sold for thousands of dollars with no question asked." *African Diamonds are a Rebel's Best Friend, Reuters*, 6/8/00.

"DeBeers is stepping up its attempts to make such Robin Cook and others do not stigmatize diamonds as 'the new fur' through constantly associated them with wars in Africa. Diamonds are commonplace in some parts of the [African] Continent and their high value is dependent on a pure image and DeBeers' restricting supply. The company has always had a huge marketing arm and 'diamonds are forever,' coined in 1947, is one of the most successful advertising slogans of all time." *African Images Could Hurt Diamond Trade, Daily Telegraph*, 6/12/00.

"The [United Nations'] main objective is to take the diamond fields in the east, which finance the rebels' war chest . . . From the diamond fields, the threats of the conflict lead

over the border. The RUF smuggles diamonds into neighboring Liberia, where President Charles Taylor (who helped launch the RUF) is, according to the British, swapping them for weapons and ammunition." *Sierra Leone: Staying On, The Economist*, 6/17/00.

"Many rebel leaders inciting civil conflict are really more interested in lucrative commodities such as diamonds, drugs, timber and coffee than in the political grievances they espouse, the World Bank says in a report release last week. . . . When the main grievances—inequality political repression, and ethnic and religious divisions—are measured objectively, they provide no explanatory power in predicting rebellion. . . . By contrast, economic characteristics—dependence on primary commodity exports, low average incomes, slow growth, and large diasporas—all are significant and powerful predictors of civil war." *Report Links Conflicts with Commodities, UN Wire*, 6/22/00.

"In Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front, a rebel outfit seeking to conquer diamond fields in the eastern part of their country, routinely chops off the limbs of citizens to force evacuations of the countryside surrounding the mines. The rebels barter diamonds for weapons and fund their movement with illicit diamond trade. . . . While the vast majority of diamonds come from conflict-free zones in Africa and are traded legitimately, enough diamonds are mined in conflict zones to create a reasonable doubt about any stone's origin." *Rights Groups Take the Stick to Carat of Conflict Diamonds, Congressional Quarterly Daily Monitor*, 6/28/00.

" . . . public perception of diamonds has been marred by the gems' links to such armed conflicts as the one in Sierra Leone, reports the Karachi Dawn. 'Suddenly, instead of being glamorous and eternal, the precious stones are shooting to the top of the political hate list,' wrote Doug Alexander. 'Their sparkle has faded in a matter of weeks.'" *Diamonds Becoming Unpopular Due to Ties to Conflict, UN Wire*, 6/29/00.

"We have always maintained that the conflict in Sierra Leone is not about ideology, tribal or regional difference," [Sierra Leone's Ambassador] Kamara added. "It has nothing to do with the so-called problem of marginalized youths or . . . an uprising by rural poor against the urban elite. The root of the conflict is and remains diamonds, diamonds and diamonds." *New York Times*, 7/6/00.

"Two weeks ago the World Bank reported that the struggle for diamonds and other commodities had overtaken politics as the biggest cause of civil war globally. The deaths of countless Africans are now inextricably linked to the glittering object that has symbolized the promise of a lasting marriage." *In Search of Hot Rocks, Newsweek*, 7/10/00.

"By far the most potent symbol of the suffering 'conflict diamonds' can inflict are the amputees of Sierra Leone. [Today] Sankoh's rebels cut the hands off defenseless civilians in order to sow terror and clear people out of diamond-rich areas. Later, long after a peace agreement had been signed, Sankoh's forces attacked U.N. peacekeepers just as they were preparing to move into rebel-held diamond zones. That audacious assault clearly demonstrated just how important diamonds had become to the RUF." *In Search of Hot Rocks, Newsweek*, 7/10/00.

"Rather quickly, the world is waking up to the role of diamonds in fueling Africa's civil wars." *Africa's Death Stones*, 7/15/00.

"Diamonds have long conjured the most romantic notions. . . . In parts of conflict-ridden Africa, however, diamonds inspire little sentimentality. African warlords have taken control of some of the most valuable

diamond mines on the continent, using the proceeds to buy guns and machetes. Their involvement in the international diamond trade has given birth to a new gemstone: the blood diamond." *A Rebel's Best Friend, Washington Times*, 7/23/00.

"Consumers have begun to ask where their diamonds come from, prodding the industry to start certifying that it does not finance civil wars, merchants said. . . . The diamond merchants say they are working under pressure from their customers." *Diamond Industry Makes Proposals, Washington Post*, 9/7/00.

"Buyers would be appalled to learn that money paid for diamond rings and bracelets may ultimately support politico-criminal bands which exploit child-soldiers and survive by atrocities and terror. The business would be ruined overnight if the barbarous crimes committed in Sierra Leone—and wholesale atrocities against civilians in the struggles over control of diamonds and minerals in the Congo, Angola and elsewhere—became associated by the Western public with luxury jewels." *How Pressure on the Diamond Trade Can do Good for Africa, International Herald Tribune*, 8/25/00.

"The diamond trade is hard to control since the stones are so easily concealed and transported. . . . On the other hand, nearly all traded jewel diamonds pass by way of four countries: South Africa . . . Belgium and Israel, . . . and the United States. All are serious countries that can suppress much of the illicit trade, if they want." *How Pressure on the Diamond Trade Can do Good for Africa, International Herald Tribune*, 8/25/00.

"DeBeers was rocked by disclosures that in 1992 the company bought \$14 million worth of diamonds from Angolan rebels and has since scrambled to burnish its public image . . . [its] strategy may prove a spectacularly profitable act of reinvention." *A Gem of a New Strategy, Time*, 9/25/00.

"Nine years of civil war . . . has devastated the civilian population of Sierra Leone. The conflict has killed over 75,000 people, displaced one-half of the country's 4.5 million people, and resulted in egregious human rights violations. . . . The RUF, however, has continued to finance its military operations through the illegal sale of diamonds." *Sierra Leone: Diamonds for Arms, Human Rights Brief*, Spring 2000.

"The photographs of sad-eyed babies whose hands were hacked off by a vicious rebel force have shocked the world's conscience. So too have reports that the wealth and weaponry of Sierra Leone's insurgents come from their control of their country's diamond fields. The horrifying juxtaposition of severed limbs with twinkling gems has even riveted the attention of the diamond industry. U.S. consumers have a particular reason to deplore the link between diamond purchases and the funding of the psychotic rebel forces in West Africa. Americans reportedly account for 65 percent of the world's diamond jewelry sales. But at present there is no way for those buying this symbol of love to make an ethical choice." *Deadly Diamonds: Gems Sold in the United States Pay for Atrocities in West Africa, Legal Times*, 9/11/00.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RUBEN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 4, 2000

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 509, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001. Had I been present I would have voted "yea."